



# Fish and Wildlife Conservation

How Fish and Wildlife Dollars Are Used in Your Backyard

## St. Croix County

### **County characteristics**

- 736 sq. mi.
- east ½ farmland/woodland; west ½ former prairie, now farmland, dotted with prairie pothole wetlands
- waters: Lower St Croix Scenic Riverway, 16 lakes including 2 outstanding resource waters; headwaters of high quality trout streams
- experiencing rapid residential growth due to proximity to Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area
- There are 72,522 residents living in St. Croix County



### **State Land Open to Hunting and Fishing**

- 7,193 acres of Wildlife, Fisheries, Streambank Protection and Natural Areas.
- 2,891 acre Willow River State Park
- Hunting and fishing license dollars pay for management of these lands

Locate DNR properties at:

[http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/dnr\\_land\\_mapping.html](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/facilities/dnr_land_mapping.html)

### **Fish and Wildlife Staff serving you**

DNR Service Center, 890 Spruce Street, Baldwin, 54002

- 2 Wildlife Biologists and 1 Wildlife Tech, 1 Fisheries Biologist, 1 Fisheries Tech; 1 Warden Supervisor, 1 Conservation Warden (1 vacant warden position), and 2 Customer Service staff.
- Staff serve St. Croix, Polk, Pierce Pepin, Dunn counties and also assist customers from the Twin Cities.

### **Activities Funded by Your Hunting and Fishing Dollars**

- Establish and maintain grassland, wetland and woodland habitat on 27 fish and wildlife properties.
- Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area (WPHRA) established to preserve and restore 20,000 acres of wetland and prairie habitat through land acquisition and conservation partnerships.
- Provide expertise and funding for habitat on private lands.
- Coordinate grants and partnerships with other agencies and conservation groups for acquisition and habitat projects.
- Manage fish populations and habitat in area lakes, rivers and streams.
- Protect and enhance high quality trout streams. Improve or restore lake fisheries through habitat improvement and/or aeration.
- Set fishing regulations and stock public waters
- Carry out fish, wildlife, environmental and habitat enforcement
- Provide instruction at all hunter education courses
- Prevent and control exotic and invasive species such as purple loosestrife, zebra mussels, wild parsnip, spotted knapweed, thistle and boxelder to maintain quality native habitat.
- Post public hunting, fishing and access sites, build and maintain parking areas.

*Activities continued...*

- Monitor local fish and wildlife populations including trout and other gamefish, waterfowl, pheasants, grouse, woodcock, deer, frogs, grassland birds, loggerhead shrikes, eagles, and trumpeter swans.
- Respond to wildlife damage and nuisance complaints; investigate fish kills; monitor fish and wildlife contaminants and diseases including CWD, West Nile Virus, mercury and Spring Viremia in fish.
- Evaluate proposed projects for environmental impacts; work to keep habitats intact and functional for fish and wildlife.
- Provide educational programs for schools, conservation organizations, civic groups and youth programs. Respond to numerous day-to-day requests for information.

## **St. Croix County Conservation Snapshots**

- 20 ALIS License agents supported
- 6 Deer, Turkey and Bear Registration Stations
- 75-100 hotline complaints investigated annually
- 500 walk-in customers assisted monthly
- 106 miles of trout streams
- 16 public boat landings



## **Fish and Wildlife Stocking Summary**

- 51,900 brook, brown and rainbow trout stocked in 5 streams annually
- 4,000 legal brook, brown and rainbow trout in 2 coldwater lakes annually
- 25,000 walleye, 2,250 bass, northern pike, and 1,000 musky stocked in 6 lakes

## **County Success Stories**

- Over the last 30 years, thousands of acres of the prairie pothole ecosystem have been preserved through the joint efforts of the DNR and Fish and Wildlife Service, providing habitat for wildlife and recreation land for the public. The WPHRA and a prairie seed farm are recent additions to this effort.
- Restoration of 15 miles of the Kinnickinnic River and development of the Kinnickinnic River Fishery Area now provides one of the best brown trout fishing opportunities in the Midwest.
- Improved fishing opportunities due to rehabilitation of Squaw, Pine and Hatfield lakes, formerly winter-kill lakes.

## **Statewide challenges to maintaining your hunting and fishing opportunities**

- Without a fee increase as proposed by Governor Doyle, the Department of Natural Resources will be forced make numerous cuts in:
  - Fish and wildlife stocking programs: Conservation law enforcement; Public hunting acres; Fish and wildlife field biologists and Customer services
- Keeping upland, shoreline and aquatic habitat intact and functional
- Multiple user conflicts - Increasing pressure on public lands
- Rapid growth – urban sprawl
- Nuisance wildlife and invasion by non-native species
- Disease management